

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-5, 7, 10 and 12-24 are currently pending:

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for use in a lifting and towing vehicle, comprising:

a transverse cross bar connected to the end of a boom located rearwardly of the lifting and towing vehicle, the cross bar being positionable below a towable vehicle, and the cross bar having two opposing end portions positionable adjacent to one of a pair of wheels on the towable vehicle;

two slidable receivers each removably connected to the opposing end portions of the cross bar, each receiver having an engagement mechanism comprising a handle with a spring-loaded plunger pin mounted on the receiver and facilitating connection and decoupling of the receivers from the cross bar, the receivers also each carrying a wheel support member having an elongated arm and a wheel retainer, and the wheel support members being capable of being swung back and forth in a generally horizontal plane;

one or more hydraulic cylinders connected to the wheel support members for driving movement of the wheel support members in the generally horizontal plane, wherein the one or more hydraulic cylinders communicate with cylinder rods that are removably attached to the receivers using removable pivot means which pass through movable plates connecting the cylinder rods to the elongated arms;

the receivers with the wheel support members together comprising a wheel lift apparatus, whereby the wheel lift apparatus may be directly removed from the cross bar and from the hydraulic cylinders in the field, including by sliding the receivers over the crossbar and thereby removing them from the crossbar, using the removable pivot means and the engagement mechanism to permit in-the-field conversion from the wheel lift apparatus to an alternate towing apparatus attachable to the crossbar.

2. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the apparatus comprises a self-loading wheel lift.
3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the alternate towing apparatus comprises a tow bar.
4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 3, wherein the tow bar includes frame fork attachments.
5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the elongated arms may be swung in the horizontal plane from a position inside tires of the towable vehicle to a wheel engaging position.
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the engagement mechanism comprises a cam lock and the handle is a rotatable handle.
8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein a distal end of each cylinder rod includes an aperture for use in coupling each cylinder rod to a receiver.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the removable pivot means comprises a removable locking pin.

13. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein each wheel support member is pivotally attached to a receiver using a pivot pin.

14. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein the pivot pin is prevented from being disengaged by a retaining screw.

15. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the attachment of each wheel support member to each receiver comprises the movable ~~two generally parallel~~ plates, one plate lying above the cross bar and one plate lying below the cross bar.

16. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein each wheel support member comprises an L-arm.

17. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the boom comprises an extensible and retractable boom, and further comprising a hydraulically powered actuator to move the boom into different angular orientations relative to horizontal.

18. (As originally presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the slidable

receivers end portions of the cross bar are horizontally moveable relative to the rest of the cross bar.

19. (Currently amended) A method for using a lifting and towing vehicle, comprising the steps of:

positioning a boom adjacent a towable vehicle, the boom carrying a transverse cross bar;

positioning the transverse cross bar below a towable vehicle, the cross bar having two opposing end portions each supporting removable and slidable receivers, each receiver having an engagement mechanism comprising a handle with a spring-loaded plunger pin mounted on the receiver and facilitating ~~relatively rapid~~ connection and decoupling of the receiver from the cross bar and carrying a wheel support member, the wheel support members being capable of being swung back and forth in a generally horizontal plane, the receivers and wheel support members comprising a wheel lift apparatus;

wherein one or more powering mechanisms are removably attached to the receivers using only removable pivot means which pass through movable plates connecting the powering mechanisms to the wheel support members;

positioning a wheel engaging portion of each wheel support member adjacent and between each of a pair of wheels of the towable vehicle, and then causing the wheel engaging portion to rotate outwardly toward the wheels of the towable vehicle into a wheel engaging

position, wherein the one or more powering mechanisms drive movement of the wheel support members in the generally horizontal plane;

lifting and towing the now wheel-engaged and towable vehicle to a desired location; and

disengaging the towable vehicle, and converting the lifting and towing vehicle in the field by ~~relatively rapidly~~ disassembling the wheel lift apparatus from the cross bar in the field by sliding the receivers along the crossbar and thereby removing the receivers from the crossbar, using the engagement mechanisms and the removable pivot means, and replacing the wheel lift apparatus with an alternate towing apparatus.

20. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 19, wherein the one or more powering mechanisms comprise hydraulic cylinders.

21. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 19, wherein the alternate towing apparatus comprises frame fork holders.

22. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of conversion is accomplished by ~~rapidly~~ removing the receivers from the cross bar.

23. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the hydraulic cylinders communicate with one or more cylinder rods that are removably attached to the receivers, the cylinder rods being disconnected from the receivers during the conversion step.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 19, wherein the wheel lift apparatus comprises a

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NO. 10022RCE3

self-loading wheel lift.

25. - 26. (Cancelled)